
# Press Release

**"FireHub" - winner of the Best Service Challenge of the Copernicus Masters 2014**

The National Observatory of Athens participated in the Best Service Challenge of the Copernicus-masters competition with the operational EO based fire management service, which was developed in the framework of the **BEYOND project**. The submitted service is entitled **"FireHub: A Space Based Fire Management Hub "**, and has been elected as the winner of the Best Service Challenge of the Copernicus Masters 2014 by an experts committee. The Copernicus-masters competition is organised by Anwendungszentrum GmbH Oberpfaffenhofen and aims to support the development of market-oriented applications that use data from the European Union's Copernicus programme (previously known as Global Monitoring of Environment and Security, or GMES).

"**FireHub**" is a service platform that consolidates a real-time fire detection and monitoring application, a large scale Burnt Scar Mapping during and after wildfires, and a fire smoke dispersion forecasting tool, based on the integration of space technologies with geospatial information and meteorological data.
The service has been qualified in the framework of several EC, Copernicus/GMES & ESA projects, relying on fully scalable and transparent automatic processes allowing the transferability of the applications to other climatic and geographic zones in Europe.
The platform addresses real decision-makers' needs and has been deployed on an operational basis to several user stakeholders, including the Greek Forest Fire Management Center of the Fire Brigade, the Ministry of Environment Energy and Climate Change, the Hellenic Telecommunications Organization and other local and regional authorities. The User base is rapidly expanding with more than 500 independent connections at a daily basis (institutional users) during the summer.
"**FireHub**" is integrated into the Global Fire Monitoring Center that belongs to the International Strategy of UN for Disaster Reduction.
For more information please visit the related website: http://ocean.space.noa.gr/FireHub

The **BEYOND** project aims at conducting cutting edge interdisciplinary research, by **Building a Centre of Excellence for Earth Observation based monitoring of Natural Disasters** in South-Eastern Europe. BEYOND foresees to increase its access range to the wider Mediterranean region through the integrated cooperation with twining organizations in Europe and USA. BEYOND Center of Excellence is hosted at the National Observatory of Athens. The BEYOND research portfolio covers a broad spectrum of natural disaster phenomena, such as earthquakes, volcanoes, extreme weather events, floods, fires, fire smoke and toxic gasses dispersion, emission concentrations, dust storms, air quality aspects and their impact to human health.

Furthermore the **BEYOND** activities are also incorporated in the update GEO workplan under the task DI-01 "Informing Risk Management and Disaster Reduction"- Section C1 Disaster Management Systems as a priority «To make information related to environmental risk and vulnerability easily accessible to a wide range of decision-makers through a virtual platform.

**Contact Details:**
**Dr. Charalampos (Haris) Kontoes**
Institute for Astronomy, Astrophysics, Space Applications and Remote Sensing
National Observatory of Athens
I. Metaxa & Vas. Pavlou Str.
GR-15236, Penteli, Greece
Tel.: +30-210-810-9186,
kontoes@noa.gr



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